

From: Cindy Pugh [adoptionunlimited@paonline.com]

Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2003 11:15 AM

To: adoptionregs@state.gov

Subject: Accreditation process

We are a very small adoption agency in Lancaster, Pennsylvania that has been in operation since 1988. We locate forever homes for about 10-15-children per year from the United States and many International countries. We maintain a very high standard of practice and are members of the JCICS.

If the Hague Convention passes, and agencies are required to go through the accreditation process, our agency, like many others, will be forced to close their doors forever. We do not receive any outside sources of funding, relying specifically on the program fees from our clients. There was a period this year that we struggled due to the economy, almost having to close the agency. If we are forced to obtain liability insurance for every occurrence, we will be forced to close. We do not even bring in income of \$100,000 per year and there is no way that we would be able to purchase this insurance.

Additionally, our agency works very hard to ensure that every need of our adoptive families is met. We network with agencies all over the United States for the placement of children both domestically and internationally. We have formed some very close relationships with these agencies as well as with our adoptive families.

What will happen to our on-going cases, such as with post-placement, and those families who do have placements yet, still completing the process? How do we explain to our families that because of politics, we can no longer assist them, even though they have formed a bond of trust with our agency?

Pennsylvania reviews our files every year, ensuring that we are completing adoptions within the statutes and regulations of the state. What will be the purpose of the Department of Public Welfare within each state? I feel that you are also giving them a "slap on the wrist", stating that they are not competent to oversee adoption agencies within their state.

Please reconsider the accreditation process. I cannot even imagine having to shut down Adoption Unlimited, Inc. due to political interference. We do live in a democratic society, or do we?

Respectfully,

Cindy Pugh
Director
Adoption Unlimited, Inc.
Lancaster, PA

Board of Directors

- Debbie Krout-Althoff (Director of Habitat For Humanity, York, PA) - Adoptive Parent of one child
- Mary Stanavage (High School teacher) - Adoptive Parent of two children
- Mark Humbert (Computer Consultant and Financial Consultant)
- Sharon Werhel (Quality Assurance Analyst) - adoptive mother
- Linda Heller (Stay-at-home Mom) - adoptive parent of six children